

Waukegan, IL - U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) was joined by city and county leaders today in Waukegan where he announced over \$5.8 million in federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Kirk invited Waukegan Mayor Dick Hyde and Lake County Board Chair Suzi Schmidt to take a walk along Genesee Street where HUD's investment in the downtown Waukegan streetscape has allowed the city and the Waukegan Downtown Association to create an environment that has fostered a growing mix of new restaurants and art galleries.

"By investing a portion of these federal dollars in economic development projects, Waukegan has created a safe, clean and pedestrian friendly environment which has paid dividends in the form of art galleries and a blend of new and old restaurants," said Congressman Kirk. "We are witnessing a renaissance in Waukegan. As we renovate the Genesee Theater, encourage private investment and the return of small and medium sized business to Waukegan's downtown and clean up our harbor, there is no end to the economic, cultural and recreational opportunities Waukegan will enjoy."

Rep. Kirk and Lake County Board Chair, Suzi Schmidt, also discussed the 46 separate activities, including economic development, public services, public facility improvements, handicapped accessibility projects and fair housing activities, that Lake County will undertake between now and April, 2003, utilizing federal dollars.

"Lake County will initiate multiple housing projects, including rental and rehabilitation housing for our seniors and transitional housing for our low income residents. This federal grant will help fund public service activities which include employment training, youth programs, crisis intervention, health services and emergency food assistance. The county will provide emergency shelter and transitional housing operation for the homeless utilizing a portion of this grant."

The 2002 HUD program funds announced today are allocated through: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) and the Supportive Housing Program (SHP). The objective of these funds is the development of viable communities by providing decent, safe and sanitary housing, a suitable living environment, expanding economic opportunities, and providing homeless assistance activities principally for persons of low and moderate income.

Lake County proposes to spend \$4,505,000 in CDBG , HOME and ESG programs which will fund some 46 separate activities, including economic development, public services, public facility improvements, handicapped accessibility projects and fair housing activities. Waukegan proposes to spend \$948,000 in CDBG funds on 18 separate activities, including housing development, housing rehabilitation, public services, public facility improvements, handicapped accessibility projects, and fair housing activities. And North Chicago proposes to spend \$384,000 in CDBG funds for 22 separate activities, including housing development, housing rehabilitation, public services, public facility improvements, handicapped accessibility, and economic development projects.

“These federal dollars will fund public service activities to benefit our youth, senior citizens, improve health, shelter homeless, ensure fair housing and encourage economic development,” said Congressman Kirk. “And I will work with Mayor Hyde, Mayor Thomas and Lake County Board Chair Suzi Schmidt to insure these federal funds continue to serve our citizens and communities most in need.”